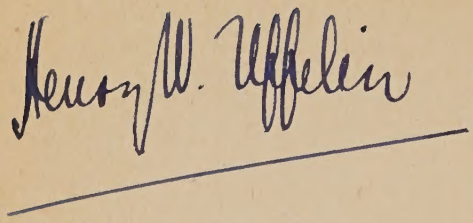

MAN'S FIRST DISOBEDIENCE

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
NEW YORK · BOSTON · CHICAGO · DALLAS
ATLANTA · SAN FRANCISCO

MACMILLAN & CO., LIMITED
LONDON · BOMBAY · CALCUTTA
MELBOURNE

THE MACMILLAN CO. OF CANADA, LTD.
TORONTO

MAN'S FIRST DISOBEDIENCE

An Interpretation and Defense of the Biblical Narrative of the Fall of Man

BY

LEANDER S. KEYSER, A.M., D.D.

PROFESSOR OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY IN HAMMA DIVINITY SCHOOL, WITTENBERG COLLEGE, SPRINGFIELD, OHIO

68-2436

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1924

All rights reserved

THE MASTER'S COLLEGE
POWELL LIBRARY
SANTA CLARITA, CA 91321

COPYRIGHT, 1924,
BY THE MACMILLAN COMPANY.

Set up and printed.
Published August, 1924.

Printed in the United States of America by
J. J. LITTLE AND IVES COMPANY, NEW YORK

PREFACE

PERHAPS no problem has caused greater perplexity to thinking people than the problem of the origin of sin and suffering. Why were they permitted to introduce themselves into the world? To this important problem we shall address our attention in this volume, with the hope that cheer may be afforded to burdened souls. While the method we shall employ is frankly argumentative, the end in view is not to win a polemical victory. That would, indeed, be an unworthy motive, of which we hope that we cannot be truthfully accused. Is the Biblical teaching on the origin of sin and suffering adequate and reasonable? is the chief subject dealt with in this work.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

AN INITIAL STATEMENT

PAGE

GIVING THE AUTHOR'S PURPOSE AND VIEWPOINT . 11

CHAPTER II

THE NON-HISTORICAL VIEWS

I. THE MYTHICAL THEORY 15
II. IS THE FALL OF MAN LEGEND, TRADITION OR FOLKLORE? 20
III. IS THE STORY OF THE FALL OF MAN INSPIRED ALLEGORY? 23
IV. IS SIN DUE TO MAN'S PRIMITIVE ANIMALISM? 30

CHAPTER III

SOME ETHICAL OBJECTIONS

I. DID THE FIRST PAIR HAVE A FAIR CHANCE? 34
II. THE TRUE NATURE OF FREEDOM 36
III. NO EVIL STRAIN IN THE FIRST PAIR . . . 40
IV. WAS THE FIRST SIN A SMALL OFFENSE? . 42

CHAPTER IV

THE HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION

		PAGE
I.	Adam and Eve Real Human Beings	45
II.	Our First Parents Created Moral Agents	46
III.	A Moral Test Essential to Free Agency	47
IV.	The Forbidden Tree	49
V.	The Serpent in Eden	54

CHAPTER V

FROM PARADISE LOST TO PARADISE FOUND

I.	Some Realistic Touches in the Biblical Narrative	59
II.	Man's Supreme Value in the Sight of His Maker	62
III.	Why God Created Man a Free Agent?	64
IV.	Man's Ejection from Eden	68
V.	The Angels with the Flaming Sword	70
VI.	Eden Vanishes! Eden Reappears!	71
VII.	Some Illuminating Beams from Science	75
	Index	83

MAN'S FIRST DISOBEDIENCE

MAN'S FIRST DISOBEDIENCE

CHAPTER I

AN INITIAL STATEMENT

THE historical character and superhuman source of the Biblical account of the origin of sin, as given in the third chapter of Genesis, have often, in recent times, been called in question. Some writers, even, who want to be regarded as conservative and to be counted among the "traditionalists," are averse to committing themselves definitely to the historicity of this part of the Bible. Among those who doubt its historical veracity, however, there is much diversity of opinion, some holding it to be myth, others legend, tradition or folklore, and still others parable or allegory. Among those who regard it as actual history, however, there is, as far as we know, practical unanimity.

The writer is frank to say at the start that he accepts the Biblical account of the first transgression as veritable history. He regards it as an event that actually occurred. Without impugning the motives of those who take a different view, he will present a number of positive reasons in support of his own conviction. Before doing so, however, he will try

to show the untenable character of various non-historical views.

In the interest of clarity it may be well to explain the standpoint and purpose of the argument herein set forth. It is not to be a debate with out-and-out infidels, nor with Biblical critics of so radical an order that they fall practically into the infidel class. A somewhat different method of reasoning than the one that will be used here would have to be pursued in dealing with them. Still, the author pauses a moment to express the hope that even such opponents who will read his presentation with an open mind and weigh it judicially, may be convinced that there is a great deal more than they have realized to be said in favor of the reasonableness and appealing character of the Biblical teaching relative to the origin of sin.

Primarily, however, the argument in this volume is meant for the consideration of the so-called "mediating" critics. We mean those who accept much of the teaching of the Bible, especially that which they style its *religious* teaching. They want to be regarded as good Christians, and would rightly resent being called infidels. Nevertheless they do not regard the Bible as plenarily inspired, but believe themselves justified, after going through it with their critical apparatus, in accepting one part as divinely given and another as merely human in origin. As eminent examples of this type of critics, mention may be made of George Adam Smith, Marcus Dods, S. R. Driver, and Charles Foster Kent. In this class, too, would belong many of the men who to-day worship the "modern mind," and go by the name

of "Modernist." Large parts of the Bible, formerly accepted almost universally as historical, and so regarded to-day by conservative Christians, are looked upon by these critics as myth, legend, allegory, or primitive belief and folklore. To illustrate: Dr. Frank Knight Sanders, in his interesting book, "History of the Hebrews," says (p. 23, Sec. 32): "In the first eleven chapters of Genesis we find a group of *stories* which convey the *ideas* of the Hebrew people concerning the creation of the world, the beginnings of human life, the conditions of primitive humanity," etc. "These *ideas* for the most part they evidently inherited from their Semitic forefathers, and adopted without serious question." [1]

While it may be claimed that these statements are not a perfectly clear and outspoken denial, the obvious implication from them is, that the early chapters of Genesis are not truly historical, and thus are not a truly divine revelation. They simply narrate in "story" form the primitive "ideas" and "beliefs" of the Hebrew people. Yet Dr. Sanders advertises that his book was written to give readers and students a true conception of the Old Testament, which he declares to be a real guide in matters of religion.

The present volume aims to make two matters plain: 1. The untenable character of the position taken by the above-named critics; 2. The historicity and reasonableness of the Biblical account of the Fall of Man, and its vital relation as well to the plan of redemption through Christ.

The ultimate aim of the author in executing this double purpose is to strengthen the faith of evan-

[1] The italics are ours.

gelical believers, by showing them that the literal interpretation of Genesis 3 is the most rational one. He desires to make it clear to them that they need not give up the doctrine of plenary inspiration [2] in the face of the speculations of the critics who have just been mentioned and described.

The author is thoroughly in earnest, and is persuaded that his message is a vital and timely one. He is willing to risk the charge that he attaches too much importance to this question. For he sincerely believes that the Fall of man, as recorded in the third chapter of Genesis, is one of the factual and necessary links in the divine plan of creation and redemption. He is unable to see how the rejection of the superhuman origin of that great pivotal narrative does not cause a serious break in the process of God's beneficent redemptive purpose and introduce needless difficulty into its interpretation.

[2] When the author uses the term "plenary inspiration," he does not mean to define the *mode*. He means simply that the Sacred Scriptures are *fully* inspired, without any attempt whatever to explain the divine *modus operandi*. 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21. The word "plenary" is from *plenus*, meaning full or complete, and conveys no idea of method.

CHAPTER II

THE NON-HISTORICAL VIEWS

I

The Mythical Theory

The first substitute for its superhuman origin to be treated here maintains that the Fall of man, as recorded in the Bible, is a mere myth, like the myths of the Babylonians, Greeks, and Romans. We shall not deal with the origin and philosophy of mythological lore. Our main purpose will be to indicate the logical inferences that must follow if the Biblical story of the Fall and its consequences belongs to the order of myths.

If it is a myth, it cannot be accepted as a true account of the genesis of sin. No one places historical reliance on mere myths. What follows, then? Simply and plainly this: no one knows how sin entered the world; that whole problem is thrown into a limbo of obscurity. If we reject the Biblical account as historically impossible and unreasonable, we must surely do the same with the mythical accounts given in the heathen systems, which are altogether fantastic and oftentimes extremely childish and absurd.[1] So on this theory we are simply left

[1] The profound differences between the Biblical and mythical accounts are brought out in George A. Barton's "Archeology and the

to the uncertainty of human speculation as to the advent of sin into the world.

Ought we to be left in darkness on so vital a matter? Sin is an outstanding fact in human experience and history. Its reality is acknowledged everywhere. There is not a nation or a tribe or an individual that does not have some sense of sin and guilt. They all perceive with intuitive vision the terrible consequences of sin. All peoples, too, believe that man's attitude toward sin will affect his status, not only in this life, but also in the life to come. Perhaps the most perplexing issue in life for the vast majority of people is how to get rid of sin, how to be freed from its dominion, cleansed from its defilement, and saved from the punishment due to its commission.

Now, does it seem to be reasonably probable, if God has given us a clear revelation of salvation from sin, that He would leave us in total darkness as to the genesis of sin? According to the Bible, the great purpose of the plan of salvation through Jesus Christ is to save the people from their sins and restore them to the righteousness of God. Over

Bible" (pp. 235-263). Dr. Barton gives translations, in poetical form, of two Babylonian accounts of Creation and one of the Fall of man. In the most vital ways they are poles apart from the Biblical narratives. The points of similarity, however, are sufficiently numerous and striking to indicate that the Biblical and Babylonian accounts may have been derived from the same source. In that case the conclusion would be reasonable that the Bible gives the original inspired recital, of which the Babylonian stories, with their crude polytheism, are corrupted forms. Dr. Albert T. Clay, the eminent archeologist, upholds this view in the following works: "Amurru," "The Empire of the Amorites," "A Hebrew Deluge Story in Cuneiform," and also most convincingly in his last book, "The Origin of Biblical Tradition," published late in 1923.

and over again the Bible condemns sin; exhorts people to seek salvation from it; even teaches that the chief mission of the eternal and only begotten Son of God in coming into the world was to redeem men from sin. All this being true, how could God leave mankind in darkness on the problem of the origin and nature of sin? Surely if He left us to find this out for ourselves, He might justly be accused of remissness. On the other hand, if the Genetical story reveals God's mind on this subject, all is clear, consistent, organic; we know just how sin came into the world; we know precisely what is its remedy. No one ought longer to prefer obscurity after he has had perspicuity offered to him, or darkness after he has been offered the light.

Many critics, especially those who wish to be regarded as "evangelical," who contend that the Genesis story of the Fall is mythical, asseverate again and again that, while the Bible is not an authority on science, the *religious* teaching of the Bible is divinely inspired, so that we can confidently rely upon it for our salvation both here and hereafter. We should like to ask them some questions: Is not the Scriptural account of man's first transgression of God's holy law *religious* in character? What is the very essence of true religion? Is it not to get rid of sin, so that communion with a pure and holy God may be re-established?

The "mediating" critics tell us that God gave an infallible revelation of the plan of redemption through Christ, and He gave it to us in the Bible. Will they tell us, then, why God gave this infallible revelation in a book that is full of all kinds of errors?

Why should an infallible revelation from God be so mixed up with erroneous and childish myths that it requires a Higher Critic, versed in Hebraic, literary, historical and archeological lore, to separate the infallible truth from the errors? Moreover and especially, why did He permit so much space, at the beginning of His book, to be devoted to narratives that read like history, and yet are not history, thus deceiving millions of people of simple faith and upright lives who read and believe the Book He gave them?

A still more serious matter is this: If myths have crept into the record of an infallible revelation of redemption through Christ, why did God permit Christ Himself to refer to the story of Eden as if it were actual history? Again, if Paul was divinely inspired, why did God permit him to commit such a blunder as to refer to Adam as a historical person and to his sin as an historical occurrence (Rom. 5:12-19; 1 Cor. 15-21, 22)? The Adamic sin is also referred to as actual history in 1 Tim. 2:13, 14.[2] Christ's clear references to the Genetical narratives are found in Matt. 19: 3-9; Mark 10: 2-9,[3] where

[2] The passages cited are in part as follows (it would be well to read them in full): Rom. 5: 12-19: "Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; so death passed unto all men, for that all have sinned. . . . Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam unto Moses," etc. Here is a direct reference to the narrative of the Fall in Gen. 3. 1 Cor. 15: 21, 22: "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." 1 Tim. 2: 13, 14: "For Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman, being beguiled, hath fallen into transgression."

[3] Mark 10: 6: "But from the beginning of the creation, male and female created He them" (*cf.* Gen. 1: 27). Matt. 19: 4: "And He

He bases the doctrine of monogamous marriage on the original creation of mankind as male and female, one of each sex, and in John 8:44,[4] where He evidently refers to the first temptation in Eden. If Christ does not refer, in the passage last cited, to the transgression in Eden, then He, too, must have joined the obscurantists. (With John 8:44 compare 1 John 3:8.) Now, our point is this: If you convict Christ of a blunder in referring to Genesis 2 and 3, you have disqualified Him as an infallible guide and Saviour. The critic's logic, therefore, shatters itself to pieces in the process of proving too much.

Take the simple, obvious course, and accept the Old Testament narratives as veritable history, and all is clear. God is doing the right, just and reasonable thing—giving to mankind an infallible revelation of both sin and redemption in the midst of actual historical settings. If there is anything distinctive in the religion of Christ at all, it is its historical character. Its feet are solidly planted on the earth, and all its connections are with man just as he lives his life here in the midst of physical, historical and psychical realities. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of the life that is to come" (1 Tim. 4:8). The religion of Christ is both earthly and heavenly; it is all-inclusive; it is neither visionary nor utopian; it is both subjective and objective; it does not cut itself off from nature and history, but maintains vital and

answered and said, Have ye not read that He who made them from the beginning made them male and female?" It should be remembered that these are the words of Christ.

[4] John 8:44: "Ye are of your father, the devil . . . He was a murderer from the beginning."

organic relations with them. Those who wish to separate the historical from the spiritual in the Scriptures are one-sided teachers of the people, divorcing religion from reality and making it hazy and mystical. The Bible reveals a sane, practical religious system, avoiding worldliness on the one side and false mysticism on the other.

Our conclusion is this: Decide that the Genetical account of sin is a mere human myth, and the trustworthiness of the Bible is invalidated right at the beginning. If that is the case, then how are we to know that the religion of redemption unfolded in it later on is not mythical too? Again, how did sin originate, if it did not originate according to the Biblical narrative? If its origin is thus wrapped in obscurity, the profound doctrines of Hamartiology and Soteriology are lost in the mists of mere speculation.

II

Is the Fall of Man Legend, Tradition, or Folklore?

Another school of critical opinion holds that the story of man's Fall in Eden is mere legend, tradition, folklore. This is not quite as extreme a view as the one just considered, because legend may rest on some original basis of historical truth, which may simply have been modified and added to from generation to generation.

Still, practically the same objections obtain here as in the case of the mythical theory. The legendary

hypothesis, also, destroys the trustworthiness, and hence impugns the divine inspiration of the Biblical record, by leaving us again in darkness as to the origin of evil and sin. When Hamartology is thus compelled to make a false or lame start, it is condemned to go limping in its entire course. If we do not know how sin got its start, how are we ever to learn what is to be its end? A clear Hamartology is a postulate of a clear redemptive process, and *vice versa*. If there is a kernel of truth in the legend of the Fall, which subsequently became mixed and overlaid with many errors and accretions, then who can tell us what that kernel of truth is? If we are told that the kernel of truth is that man disobeyed the commandment of God, and thus brought sin into the world, we would simply ask, In what way did he disobey God? What was the form of the temptation and what the act of disobedience? Here the answer of this critical school must be that no one knows, or they must resort to surmises and guesses. In the latter case we cannot see why the Biblical narrative has not as reasonable a claim to be adopted as the conjectures of the critics.

As is well known, the "mediating" critics contend that their theories do not invalidate the inspiration and integrity of the Bible. In his "Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament," [5] Dr. S. R. Driver protests almost pathetically that his method of dealing with the Holy Scriptures does not nullify their inspiration, but rather puts it on a firmer and more rational basis. This he says at the outset of

[5] Pp. VIII, IX and XIII of the Preface.

his work. Straightway in the body of his book,[6] however, he proceeds to show that Genesis 1 and 2 cannot be accepted as true history because they contradict each other; the first chapter gives one account of creation, while the second gives quite a different account; *ergo,* these accounts cannot both be true; one or both must be erroneous. For this reason he accepts the theory of their origin in a number of discrepant documents, like J, E, etc., which the "redactor" did not take the trouble to harmonize when he combined them in a consecutive narrative.

Yet Dr. Driver lets stand his previous protest that his theories do not in the least affect the doctrine of divine inspiration adversely! Does this mean that, after He had inspired the first chapter, the Holy Spirit then immediately contradicted Himself in the second? Great is Diana of the Higher Criticism! We beg to know what kind of divine inspiration all this is. The facts are, as any one can prove in a very short time, these critics do not treat the Old Testament books as if they were truly inspired supernaturally, but as if they were largely, if not wholly, human documents, drawn from human sources. We wish, therefore, that they would not try to occupy two positions at the same time. If chapters 1-3 of Genesis are full of human errors, how can they be divinely inspired?

Sometimes the question is asked: Are not these critics honest men? Is it right to question their sincerity in the face of their assertion that their theories do not destroy the inspiration and authority of the Bible? Our reply is: We are not calling their

[6] Pp. 5-10 *ff.*

sincerity in question; it is their *logic* that we are interrogating. It is not for us to judge these men's motives. God only is able to do that. It is surely within our province, however, to expose the lameness of their reasoning and to point out the conclusions that are inevitable from their premises. So we say plainly that, if you turn the Biblical narratives into mere human legends, you undermine the doctrine of the divine inspiration of the Bible.

But says an objector: "Could not God have inspired these Hebrew legends?" No, that would not help us at all; for if He inspired them, that would make them true, and therefore we would have to accept their historical reality as before. In that case, only by using words disingenuously, could such records be called human "legends." We should frankly give them their correct designation, namely, *inspired history*. We must therefore maintain that the Holy Spirit would not produce a document that contains many human errors and only a remnant of revealed truth.

III

Is the Story of the Fall of Man Inspired Allegory?

The next view to be scrutinized is that the Biblical narrative of the Fall is inspired allegory. This seems to be rather a popular view with the liberal critics of the day. It has been shown again and again by conservative Biblical scholars to be untenable, but the liberalists keep on clinging to it as if

no refutation had ever been made. That is one of the serious faults of the liberal school—they simply ignore the works that disagree with their views.

Instead of citing authorities, however, let us look for ourselves into the merits of the allegorical or parabolic hypothesis. Let us turn upon it the search-light of reason. If the Bible story is a parable or an allegory—either term may be used—is it a good one? Is it worthy of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit? Are the points of comparison lucid? Is it presented in the parabolic or allegorical form, so that no one in reading it would be likely to mistake it for literal history?

There is no doubt even in the mind of the intelligent child that Nathan's story of the ewe lamb and Christ's story of the prodigal son are parables. On their face they bear the hall-marks of the parable. The circumstances in which they were spoken indicate plainly and unmistakably their figurative character. Is the same true of the Genetical narrative of the Fall? Is the story so told and so environed as to show plainly that it was meant by the writer to be a piece of fiction pointing a moral? We have never heard of any one who mistook Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" for literal history.

Is it not a patent fact, however, that the vast majority of Bible users in the past have thought that Genesis 3 was historical, and that most Bible believers even to-day think it is a narrative of fact? If this narrative is a parable, what are the specific points of comparison in it? Are they clear and unmistakable, as ought to be the case in a piece of

imagery? We readily catch the point in Nathan's parable and in the parables of the prodigal son, the sower, the lost sheep, and the lost coin. When Christ feared that His disciples might not discern the true teaching of any one of His parables, He gave them the interpretation, and thereby proved that He was a true teacher. But is the interpretation of this story of Genesis 3 clear?

For example, in every well-constructed parable or simile most of the *foci* of the picture plainly stand for some truth in the moral and spiritual realm. In the Fall story what does the garden stand for? Will the critics tell us? Does it mean that our first parents—or the original progenitors of the human race—lived in a beautiful garden somewhere on the earth? If so, then we have a parable in which the garden stands for its literal self. On the other hand, if the original human pair, as Evolution tells us, were a couple of ape-like creatures living in a wilderness or a jungle, where life was hard and existence a severe struggle, then the parable is not consonant with, but actually false to, the facts.

Again, all the animals which were brought to Adam to be named were in the garden—what do they represent if this story is a parable? Our first parents were permitted to eat of all the trees in the garden save one. What do those fruit-trees stand for in this so-called parable? What is the specific truth to which they are relevant? The forbidden tree, with its attractive fruit—what is the specific point of comparison here? The Bible story is detailed in this place. The tree "was good for food"; what does that mean, if the story is an allegory?

THE MASTER'S COLLEGE
POWELL LIBRARY
[illegible] 91321

It "was a delight to the eyes"; what is the analogue in that instance? It was a tree "to be desired to make one wise"; another point to be elucidated allegorically.

The parabolists should also point out the analogy in the following cases: Adam and Eve were ashamed after they had eaten of the prohibited fruit; they made aprons for themselves; they went and hid themselves when they heard God coming; they blamed another party, both of them, when they were accused; they were driven out of the garden; they were punished with toil and childbearing. Here are many details. They must each of them have some pertinency, or else they are idle ornamentations that simply weigh down the "allegory" with useless lumber, and make it a labyrinth instead of a luminous similitude. Bunyan's allegories are masterpieces of pictorial writing in comparison with this mixed, obscure, enigmatical "allegory" of Genesis. Yet the critics try to make themselves believe that it is a "*divinely inspired* allegory"!

Perhaps the proponents of the parable theory will reply by accusing us of trying to make a figure of speech "go on all fours." Not at all. We honestly do think, however, that any truly named allegory ought to have at least *two* feet to walk on. The difficulty with this critical theory is that the "allegory" in question has too many minutiæ that have no pertinency in the psychological sphere, and therefore as an allegory it is a complete failure. Æsop's fables far excel it. Christ's parables are luminous with spiritual meaning. Every one can see the main *foci* of the illustrations in all these admir-

able pieces of rhetoric. All of Christ's parables are constructed on true literary principles.

Let us now look at the one point where an analogy *might* be detected in this so-called "parable"—that is, where one might be discerned, not spontaneously and easily, but after considerable mental effort. The point is this: the whole incident of the temptation might constitute a *subjective psychical experience.* That means the experience was only an occurrence in the minds of our first parents. In some way—no one knows how—the suggestion of evil came into their minds, and they entertained it, and thus they fell into sin.

Let us analyze that proposition for a moment. Would our first parents have had any comprehension of such an abstract matter as this interpretation would impose upon their powers of understanding? Would they have known what was meant by "subjective" and "objective"? What idea would they have had the capacity to form of a "mere inner psychical experience"? True, we believe they were good and pure, and had a fair practical knowledge —enough to know that they should obey their God and Maker; yet who could ever suppose they were versed in the modern sciences of psychology and metaphysics? If such knowledge was within their compass and they knew that there never was a real garden, a real tree, a real serpent and a real ejection from Paradise, nothing but simply a "subjective psychical experience," it seems strange that they never told their children and children's children the truth about the occurrence.

Nor is that all. How could the people of that

olden time, the childhood of the human race, have understood abstract matters? How much less could the primitive man, little superior in intelligence to a chimpanzee, according to the evolutionists, have had any least conception of the meaning of an "inner experience"? Now, if they could not have understood the abstract statement, how could they have discerned it disguised in the "allegory" that the critics think God gave them? Of what benefit would such an "allegory" have been to them if they could not have understood its purport? Or if they could have understood what was meant by an "inner psychical experience," why mix it with an allegory at all, and especially one with so many irrelevant details? No; we contend that if Genesis 3 is an allegory, it is a very confusing one, and its alleged points of comparison are extremely obscure and far-fetched. There is no clear *tertium comparationis,* as there must be in every well-constructed parable or allegory.

Another difficulty arises: On the supposition that the Genetical story is a parable, representing a subjective experience only, what was the special temptation that confronted the primeval pair? Precisely what form did it take? Who or what was their tempter? What constituted their first act of disobedience? Was it only a vague inner movement of the soul that found no outlet? If there was an overt act, what was it? Did Adam use profane language, or lose his temper, or beat his wife? Or was Eve guilty of similar feminine offenses? Or did they both actually eat of some kind of fruit forbidden? Do not think that these are idle questions.

When men and women sin in these common and concrete ways to-day, we look upon their acts as ethically wrong and as sinful in God's sight. If Adam and Eve committed some open sin of this kind, it might just as well have been the sin of eating fruit forbidden. For God to inspire an allegory in which one overt sin was made to symbolize another sin of the same species would be absurd.

Thus it is evident that the allegorical hypothesis creates more difficulties than it removes. Most serious of all, it calls the goodness and wisdom of God in question. Later on we shall endeavor to show, in a positive exposition, that the acceptance of the third chapter of Genesis as history obviates these difficulties.

In concluding this section, a few words may be in order regarding certain fundamental principles of literary interpretation. Hermeneutics, which is the science of Biblical exegesis, is one of the chief disciplines of every well-organized theological seminary. One of the fundamental rules of that science is that what was clearly intended by a writer for history should never be turned into allegory or any other figurative form of explanation. As a rule, the unbiased reader can easily differentiate between the figurative and the historical in the Bible, according to the context or some other clear *indicia*. To illustrate. When Christ said, "I am the vine; ye are the branches," we know instinctively that He was using a metaphor. But when He said to the Samaritan woman at the well, "I that am speaking to you am He" (the Messiah), we know that the literal interpretation is the only possible

one. Says Dr. James H. Snowden:[7] "To take figurative language literally, or literal language figuratively, is to be blind to its real meaning, and may subvert the very foundations of human communication." He might also have added, "and of divine revelation." Some one has said pithily: "If the literal sense makes good sense, why look for any other sense?" [8]

We feel moved to add that the old discredited allegorical method of Biblical interpretation, carried to such extreme lengths by Origen, in the second and third centuries, A.D., should not be employed in this critical and scientific age. It is the method of the lawless dreamer, but not that of the practical Christian or the critical scholar.

IV

Is Sin Due to Man's Primitive Animalism?

Another theory declares that sin had its origin in the primitive animalism of man. This hypothesis is proposed by the advocates of evolution. In his evolving, by a slow and painful process, the time came when man felt the first inkling of moral obligation. His conscience made its first feeble effort to perceive and sense right and wrong; in other words, to discern moral distinctions. Of course,

[7] Snowden's "The Coming of the Lord," p. 40.

[8] Quoted from Charles C. Cook's excellent work, "God's Book Speaking for Itself," p. 16. The name of the epigram-maker is not given.

this crude animal-man had only a dim idea of what that all meant. Even in that remote paleolithic age, however, when man permitted his natural animalism to overcome this new-born moral impulse, he sinned against what feeble light he had, and thus he "fell." Not only he, but all his posterity went down with him. What the nature of his first sin was the wisest savants cannot tell us, nor do they venture a conjecture, save in the most general and ambiguous terms.

What is to be said concerning this theory that man's fall was due to his primitive animalism? In the first place, it assumes that the theory of man's evolution from lower forms of life has been scientifically demonstrated. That, however, is far from the case. Indeed, philology, history, archeology and comparative religion prove incontestably, to the minds of many of the most competent scholars of the day, that man did not come up from the brute creation by a process of natural evolution. As Dr. James Orr pithily said in his great and good book, "The Christian View of God and the World," it will be time enough to give up the view of man's origin by divine creation when its opponents have clearly cited one concrete instance in which a pagan race, untouched by any moral and spiritual force outside of itself, has evolved into a Christian people; in other words, has come up, by means of forces resident within itself, from fetichism and animism through polytheism to the acceptance of pure Christian monotheism.

However, in this work we shall not go into particulars in dealing with the theory of evolution.

Only a few facts relating to its ethical implications will be emphasized here. First, if man's sin is to be laid at the door of his primitive animalism, it follows that God must be the author of sin, for He must have given to man that primitive animalism which weighted him down for millenniums. Indeed, He must have foreordained the whole age-long process whereby, it is claimed, man ascended in this slow and painful way. Moreover, if, as man's moral nature was just learning to creep, he yielded to the overwhelming odds against him, then we say God not only caused man to sin, but failed to give him a fair chance. For at that point in his evolution his moral powers must have been very feeble, while his animal nature must have been very strong. Thus man was foredoomed to sin. In the vernacular of our own day, he was not given "a square deal." Far preferable is the conception of the origin of sin so simply and graphically depicted by the writer of Genesis. According to it, man was endued at the start with rational intelligence and moral freedom, was sufficiently warned against the dire consequences of disobedience, and was therefore given a fair opportunity. It was his own fault that he fell into sin. God cannot be held responsible for his defection.

Furthermore, the theory of man's primeval animalism is based on a fundamental ethical error. It posits the seat of evil, even moral evil, in matter, in the body. That was the error of the Gnostics and Manicheans, whose views were condemned and refuted long ago by all thorough-going ethicists. Mere physical evil and suffering might have their source in matter; moral evil *never*. But moral evil, not

physical evil, is the great crucial fact in the world's history and experience. Moral evil can have its genesis only in free, self-conscious personality.

Therefore the Bible is ethically right, and is, moreover, most profound, when it teaches in Genesis 3:1-5 that the tempter first injected doubt into the *mind* of the woman, and only after her fatal psychical yielding, did the body participate in the overt act. More vigorous and fundamental ethical thinking would prevent the acceptance of crude mechanistic, materialistic and deterministic theories of morality.

CHAPTER III

SOME ETHICAL OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

I

Did the First Pair Have a Fair Chance?

In opposition to some of those who question the historical character of the Biblical recital of the Fall, we maintain that our first parents were not justified in yielding to the beguilement of the tempter. They were "without excuse."

First, they were duly warned. God had plainly and solemnly declared: "Ye shall not eat thereof. In the day ye eat thereof, ye shall surely die." We consider people even to-day, with the added burden of natural depravity upon their faculties, culpable when they disregard distinct and positive admonitions; we do not lightly excuse them or grow sentimental over them and say, "They couldn't help it!" If such invertebrate ethical teaching were to become general, how long would human society and governments endure? Our first parents should have heeded the explicit command of God.

Second, their freedom of action was almost un-

limited in their Eden home. There was only one prohibition. God did not hedge them in. They had access to all the trees of the garden except the forbidden one. For that reason, too, their disobedience was inexcusable.

The objector should also remember the Biblical account makes it plain that our progenitors were endued with free will. They were not in the grip of necessity. It is evident that God made them moral agents with the power of alternate choice; else surely He never would have given them an injunction to obey, nor have punished them for their disobedience. And since they were thus endowed, they should have said *no* decisively to the inveigler, just as people realize they should say *no* to-day in the face of every temptation. For the abuse of their freedom they were condemned. They were not considered guilty because they were tempted, but solely because they voluntarily yielded to the temptation. This teaching is based on ethical experience in all ages.

They should have remembered, too, that God, who made them and all things about them, would know better than any mere creature what was conducive to their welfare. There are some postulates that should always be taken for granted. God's superior wisdom, yes, His perfect wisdom and goodness, should have been taken for granted by them. This will be found true in the vast majority of cases—the people who try to excuse Adam and Eve for their disobedience also try to find an excuse for their own wrong-doing, and seek to shift the blame for it on to other shoulders; upon God, or heredity, or environment, or circumstances.

II

The True Nature of Freedom

A few words may be germane here as to the true nature of free will.[1] Many people cannot understand how the will can be free; how human nature has the power of self-determination and self-direction. They seem to be unable to grasp the idea of a will at equilibrium, able by its own power to upset that equilibrium and enter upon the execution of a purpose of its own. In their thought, when they begin to speculate, there must always be something external to the will that moves it coercively. The external force may be a physical or mechanical one, or it may be a motive.

In reply we will say that no one can peer into the back of the mind and explain all about this psychical mystery of free will. Intuitions possess a character that cannot be deciphered fundamentally. We know that they are, but we cannot demonstrate them by a logical or mathematical process. The problem of cognition is just as puzzling as the problem of volition. How can you perceive even a natural object? How is the image of a tree, impinged on the retina of the eye, conveyed by the optic nerve back into the brain and there transferred into the field of psychical consciousness? As all thinkers know, that is one

[1] For a somewhat extended vindication of the libertarian view of the will, reference is made to the author's "A System of General Ethics" (second edition), pp. 114-128, 151-156. Acute discussions may be found in the following works: A. S. Pringle-Pattison's "The Idea of God in the Light of Recent Philosophy," p. 31; L. F. Gruber's "Whence Came the Universe?" pp. 97-99.

of the great, unsolved problems of physiological psychology; it is the unresolved problem of epistemology in philosophy. Just as mysterious is the problem of the will's power of autonomy.[2] We do not know the far interior essence of things, either of matter or of mind. As the philosophers say, we know only *phenomena;* we do not know *noumena.* Kant proved this long ago, though we think he carried his skepticism too far. While we do not know what matter and mind are in their essence, we certainly know a good deal about their phenomena.

Now, how shall we prove the freedom of the will? Surely not by speculation, for by that path we soon find ourselves in a *cul de sac.* We prove it from experience. Experiment with yourself, and see whether you cannot use your will. Stand at the vertex of the angle made by two paths, with no special reason why you should take one or the other, use your will, and note whether you are driven by necessity, or have the power, first to choose, then to execute your choice. How does your experience report itself to you in such a case? Why, that you

[2] With Thomas Huxley the crucial problem of psychology was sense perception. He could not bridge the chasm between the molecular motion in the optic nerve and the brain and the irruption of the retinal image of an object into mental consciousness. He thought that the problem might never be solved. Nor has it yet been solved for all the boasted wisdom of the modern age. On the other hand, Herbert Spencer's stumbling block in psychology was the freedom of the will. He held that, if the will is free, all science of the mind is impossible. Our reply to these speculations is: we know by experience (empiricism) that we are capable of both cognition and volition; and that ought to end the matter so far as its factuality is concerned.

certainly made a choice and did it voluntarily. That reading of the situation is directly registered in your consciousness. If it is not true that you chose freely, then consciousness must be a general falsifier; in which case we do not see how even the skeptic can have confidence in any of his mental processes and experiences.

Let us "try out" our experience in another way to show how spontaneously and intuitively we differentiate between acts free and acts coerced. We have employed this illustration more than once in the classroom. Take Jones as a concrete example. When the class is dismissed, he steps out into the hall-way. If some one should ask him, "Did you walk out of the class-room of your own free will and accord?" he would promptly answer in the affirmative and be surprised at the irrelevancy of the question. But suppose a contest had arisen between him and the instructor, and the latter had taken him by the collar and forcibly ejected him from the room. Now, suppose you ask him whether he left the room of his own free will and accord; you know what the answer would be. Even small children, who have never heard of free moral agency, or the self-determining power of the ego, and such-like abstruse matters, intuitively make a distinction between forced and free acts. If experience is not decisive here, we have no way of checking up the true and false in any psychical process.

Light may also be thrown upon the nature of free will by the doctrine of conflicting motives. Of course, where the ego has to deal with only one motive, the will would perhaps not function, but the

individual would move, as it were, in a straight line. However, in many cases the ego experiences the pull and haul of two or more motives. Then, in making a choice between or among the motives, the freedom of the will comes out clearly into the field of consciousness. The ego, having made its decision through the exercise of judgment, must then execute it through the use of the will. Apply this analysis to the situation in Eden. Our first parents were impelled by at least two motives; one of them the feeling of obligation to do God's will; the other the temptation to go their own independent way. As free beings they could choose between them.

It should be borne in mind that, if the will were not free, we would never have the feeling of moral approval when we do right nor of guilt and moral shame when we do wrong. If the witness of our consciousness is not to be trusted in this matter, our whole mentality is out of gear. Skepticism here spells mental impotence; in fact, mental suicide. The pursuit of knowledge is worse than useless; it is futile and foolish.

We may go further, and assert that the necessitarian theory of the will means the destruction of ethics. If this view provides any office for conscience at all, it must be a conscience that is monarch with no executive power at its call to carry out its mandates. If human nature has a judicatory department, it must also have an executive department, just as is the case in all human governments worthy of the name. Determinism in psychology, if universally accepted, would destroy human society and government. A theory with such practical implica-

tions cannot be true, or the world would be a chaos instead of a cosmos.

All these arguments respecting freedom apply to our original ancestors in Eden. They were free because they were moral agents; they had the power of choice. They should have made proper use of their divinely given faculties.

III

No Evil Strain in the First Pair

Not infrequently it has been asserted that there must have been something evil in the very constitution of the original pair, or the temptation could have made no appeal to them. There must have been some wicked element in them that reacted to the solicitations of the evil one. Here we are brought face to face with one of the most recondite problems of psychology and ethics. But we must deal with it frankly, and as effectively as possible, even if we cannot do so with perfect adequacy.

We do not believe that, because a moral being can be subjected to temptation, it follows necessarily that there is something essentially evil in his nature. We can conceive of his nature being pure at the start, and remaining, after the temptation has done its worst, pure to the end. In dealing with psychical and ethical realities, we must try to keep our thinking free from physical analogies. It must be remembered that moral contamination belongs to a different category from physical pollution, and something far more and higher is involved than mere contact.

A psychical susceptibility equal to cognizing and feeling a temptation is essential to moral agency itself, but is by no means a token of inherent moral weakness or corruption. In truth, a mind cannot be morally contaminated in the sense covered by the term of guilt until the proffered evil is cherished by and incorporated in the will. Therefore, had our first parents at once repelled the evil suggestion, coming upon them from without, they would not have suffered the slightest contamination; nay, rather, they would have been lifted to a higher moral and spiritual level by that very act, for then they would have voluntarily taken into their wills the ethical command of God, and thus would have made their original con-created righteousness their own inherent possession. They would have gained a victory that would have lifted them up into the sphere of real personal morality. Prior to that they were good by creation; then they would have been good also by their own choice. This difference constitutes the very heart of morality, its very essence.

All theologians who accept the orthodox Christology, and many who accept even a lower view of our Lord's person, believe in the doctrine of His sinlessness. He was pure and undefiled and not to be classed with sinners. Yet He could be reached by temptation, for His test in the wilderness, on the pinnacle of the temple and on the high mountain could not have been mere play and sham, a mere spectacular performance, whether it was a subjective experience or an external trial. The writer of the Hebrew letter says that Jesus was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin"; and the

same word used here for "tempted" (*peirazo*), in relation to Him, is used elsewhere to designate man's temptations. Should it be said that Christ's temptations were vicarious, the reply would be, in order to be truly substitutional they still had to be *real.* Yet the Scripture which teaches that Christ was capable of being tempted, also teaches just as clearly that He was "without sin."

In the same way, in his degree, Adam, also, capable as he was of being tempted, was without inherent sin as he came from God's creative hand. Put in still another way for the sake of emphasis, his will could be tested, and the testing need carry no necessary connotation of an inherent sinful propensity. No! man was not created with an evil strain in his nature. The orthodox theologians are correct when they teach that man's original state was one of "moral integrity."

IV

Was the First Sin a Small Offense?

Sometimes the objection is raised that the sin of Adam and Eve was only a slight offense, a mere peccadillo. We have known unbelievers and Biblical critics to ask scornfully, "Would God have punished our first parents so severely merely for stealing an apple?"

At first blush there may seem to be some justice in the objection; but if we think more deeply of the first sin, we shall find that the Biblical teaching is ethically very profound after all, and the objectors

prove themselves to be more or less superficial. The apparently venial nature of the act—merely eating fruit forbidden—adds to its moral depth and significance. Had this sin been some base crime, attention would have been drawn from the sinful principle itself, namely, the act of disobedience, to the terrible character of the sin. Men would thus be led to think that sin consists of committing some act of gross obliquity. "Big sins" would be regarded as the only sins.

Perhaps in no other simple way than by the lightness of the offense could it have been shown that sin in its very nature, and not merely certain outrageous kinds of sin, is ruinous and destructive. Any act of rebellion against God's righteous government must, by its inherent character, aim at the downfall of and strike a blow at His rule and dominion. No sin, therefore, is a mere incident. In essence it is revolution, rebellion, anarchy.

Moreover, if God visited such severe retribution upon what would generally be regarded as a minor offense, how seriously does it prove He must regard all sins? How severely will He deal with constant and conspicuous offenders? "For God will bring every work into judgment, with every hidden thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Eccles. 12:14). At the final judgment account will have to be given even of every idle word that men have spoken (Matt. 12:36).

Again, if Satan had proposed some terrible crime to his victim, he would have defeated his own object, for the woman would have shrunk or fled in terror from it. Thus there would have been no real test

of her moral strength. If you wanted to subject a good man to a test, would you put before him a proposal to commit murder? No; you would suggest something far more insidious; something that would seem to be comparatively harmless and that would constitute a real temptation in the precise context of the life he was living. So the evil one in the first temptation revealed his hard sense in his approach to the mother of the race.

It should be remembered, too, that sin—sin in its real sense of guilt—is not some open act; its inception is in the mind; it is something psychical—a movement of the soul in the wrong direction; its essence is internal; only its manifestation is external. Hence Satan went to the root of sin's real character when he stirred within the woman's soul the movement of self-will and selfishness by injecting doubt of God into her mind. The Bible always plows deep. One of its writers says, "He that hateth his brother is a murderer" (1 John 3:15), meaning that hatred in the heart toward a brother is the seed principle of murder. Just so the initial temptation in Eden's garden sticks its probe deeply into the soil of both ethics and psychology, proving that sin is rebellion against the divine government. Man's first disobedience of the divine law was the generic, seminal, universal sin. From it all moral obliquities have sprung.

CHAPTER IV

THE HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION

THUS far we have been dealing with our subject negatively; we shall now endeavor to show that the historical view of Genesis 3 is the most reasonable and the only adequate one.

I

ADAM AND EVE REAL HUMAN BEINGS

The original progenitors of the human family, wherever they dwelt, must have been *real* human beings. They could not have been mythical, allegorical or legendary creatures. Since their progeny are real personalities, they must have been. Otherwise they could not have begotten real personalities. As real human beings, they must have had bodies and lived somewhere on the earth, walked on the ground, and eaten of the fruit of the soil. They could not have walked on allegorical ground or subsisted on legendary fruit. They must have also had enough mentality to take care of themselves, gather food, and otherwise provide for their subsistence. This agrees with the realism of the Genetical account, which tells us that Adam and Eve lived in a real

earthly locality. So this Bible story is realistic; its scene is not suspended in the air; it bears strong marks of verisimilitude.

II

Our First Parents Created Moral Agents

These primeval ancestors must have been moral agents. Their descendants are moral agents, and of course only moral agents could beget moral agents. Science itself, as well as common sense, would teach that the moral could not evolve from the non-moral. If it could, it would be a case of water rising higher than its source, which is scientifically absurd. Therefore our primitive ancestors, being moral agents, must have been so created and so environed as to afford them a chance to exercise and prove their moral agency. They could not have been *forced* to do right or wrong, or their free moral agency would have been destroyed. They must have been free; for mere automata are not moral beings. On the one hand, it would not be fair to them to weigh them down with animalism, for that would have overborne their wills on the side of wrong; neither would it have been right to place them in a locality that made life too hard for them to develop their moral and spiritual natures. On the other hand, their situation could not have been wholly lacking in trial or test; for then they would have had no opportunity to exercise and discipline their moral powers.

Now, weigh these natural and ethical considerations well, and see whether you can figure out by any kind of ingenuity a more fitting assemblage of conditions in which our first parents could have lived and unfolded their moral and spiritual life than those so lucidly pictured in Genesis 2 and 3. There all the circumstances were precisely right, neither idealized nor made unnatural. Ethically considered, the primeval pair were rightly placed in livable surroundings, in a garden, not in a howling, noisome wilderness or jungle or an arid desert. Suppose that God is good and loving and rational, as the critics themselves teach, would He not have been likely to deal with the first human beings just as is delineated in Genesis 2 and 3? Then why refuse to accept this part of the Bible? Why seek for some other way, and seek in vain, for it cannot be discovered nor proved by any amount of research and speculation?

III

A Moral Test Essential to Free Agency

Since the progenitors of the race must have been real human beings, placed in a real natural environment, and also real moral beings, and not mere animals or automata, opportunity must have been given to them to choose between right and wrong. Therefore they could not have had absolutely unlimited freedom in the paradisaical garden. Had God told them they might eat of every tree, and do as they

pleased in every respect, they could not have been free moral agents. Morality always connotes alternative choices. Either that as a minimum or no morality.

If the doubter should object by asking, "Why did God make man a free moral agent at all?" we would reply: that question is not germane just now; we know that God *did* make the first man a free moral agent, for we, his progeny, are such beings. Whether we like it or not, we must put up with what is, and God has made man a moral being, not a mere machine. The crucial point is not to find fault, but to see whether we cannot find a rational account of the nature and origin of moral agency and of the coming of sin into the world; for that sin is here is a patent, undeniable fact. Besides, the man who finds fault with God for creating moral agents proves by that very token that he would prefer to be a happy automaton, and that, it must be said frankly, is not very complimentary to his moral perceptions and development. After all, whether we understand it or not, moral and spiritual excellence is the greatest and noblest thing in the universe, and every right-minded man in the world admits it. Coerced goodness is a very low grade of goodness.

So it follows by the logic of ethics that it was necessary to provide a moral test in the garden of Eden. There had to be at least one prohibition there, one opportunity to choose between alternatives. What should be the form of that test? The answer to this question leads to the consideration of an interesting and crucial part of the Biblical narrative of the Fall.

IV

The Forbidden Tree

The forbidden tree is styled "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." Was it a real tree or only a symbolical tree? The hypothesis that it was a symbolical tree would make the Biblical narrative a freak in literature—a story about real human beings, in a real garden, amid real animals and trees, which suddenly, right in the heart of the narrative, introduces a figurative object, without any hint of a change in the style of the narration! This would be beyond belief even in the case of the work of a merely human composer; how much more incredible if it were inspired of God!

If we will assume for the time being that this inhibited tree was a real tree, we shall see how natural and rational the Bible story is; how it harmonizes with the very nature of things as we know them to-day and as they have existed throughout all human history. Our first parents must have been dual beings just as we are; both physical and psychical; composed of body and soul. With their bodies they were organically connected with the natural cosmos, just as men are to-day. With their minds or souls they had communion with God and each other, just as human beings have to-day. Soul and body are joined organically in human personalities. They are distinct as entities, indeed, but are so constituted that only in organic union are they in their normal and God-intended condition. In the original state of integrity, as created by the

Almighty, no doubt body and soul fitted each other in the most perfect way, so that there was no schism between the *psuche* and the *soma*. Even now they are so intimately conjoined that whatever affects the one affects the other. Inner joy, and especially ethical joy, causes the body to be sprightly and wholesome; mental grief makes the body droop and wither away. So bodily health gives vigor to the mind, while physical disease always interferes with vigorous mental action. In the original state of integrity the union of man's two natures must have been perfect.

If man was thus composed of body and mind in vital union, the form chosen for the test of his moral agency ought to have been inclusive of his total being and should have been of such a character as to integrate with both parts of his dual nature. If the test had been only subjective and psychical, it would have touched only one section of his corporate personality; it would have fallen short of an appeal to him as an integer. More than that, the test would then have come to him in a different way from the vast majority of the tests that come to men to-day. That would have turned the first man into a sort of mythical being, not a natural man like the race of men who have sprung congenitally from him.

How could a test have been more adequately devised to meet all the conditions in the case than the one described in the third chapter of Genesis? Do not most of our temptations to-day come to us through eye-gate, ear-gate and palate-gate? Well, there you have the entire category of the appeals to evil in the first temptation as given in the Bible.

Is it not a wonderful narrative? The Holy Spirit, in giving to the world this story of the first sin, knew better than to sever man's psychology from his physiology. More about this later.

According to the Biblical record, God called the forbidden tree "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." A somewhat cumbersome name, apparently, but the nomenclature is correct—that is, just what it must have been, according to the principles of scientific ethics. Remember, it is not called "the tree of good and evil," for then the tree itself would have been good and evil, which would have made God the author of sin. But it was called "the tree of the *knowledge* of good and evil," which means that our first parents were not to learn the difference between good and evil by taking the evil into their own being in experience; in other words, they were not to *experiment* with evil to see what it was like. To-day there are people who think they must experience evil in order to learn in what its evil character consists; they dally with it, play with it, and ere they are aware, they are defiled by it, and seriously or fatally injured. Our first parents were to learn to know the difference between good and evil, not by experimenting with evil, but by gradual growth under God's guidance in the knowledge of the good. The young man who thinks he must "sow his wild oats" in order to know all sides of life, good and bad, pays too dearly for his experience, for the harvest that will come by and by will be one of sorrow and corruption. The same itching to know was present with Adam and Eve in the garden—they wanted to take a "short cut" to the

knowledge of good and evil. True, they secured the knowledge, but by incorporating the evil in their wills and experiences, and in the process they did themselves and their posterity irreparable harm, except as God in grace intervened; whereas God meant that they should gain the knowledge of the difference between good and evil by the normal method of growth in wisdom under His direction.

Some years ago a noted unbeliever declared that this Bible story proved that God wanted to keep Adam and Eve from gaining knowledge—that is, wanted to keep them in ignorance. But that is an unfair way of dealing with the text of the Scripture, which does not call the forbidden tree "the tree of knowledge," but "the tree of the knowledge of *good and evil,*" meaning actual contact with and contamination by evil.

Let us now see how marvelously the test that came to our first parents was adapted to their composite nature, just as are all tests set before human beings to-day. For the present we will not deal directly with the inveigler, but will try to present the *rationale* of the temptation itself. Look closely at the text (Gen. 3:6). After the tempter had insidiously tried to inject doubt in the woman's mind, verse 6 says: "And when the woman saw that the tree was *good for food.*" Here is a temptation that seeks entrance within by a path through the physical side of human nature. Of course the *psuche,* the real moral center of man's being, was the main objective, but the allurement came directly and patently through a physical avenue, the desire to gratify a natural appetite. Thus the body was

drawn into, and became an integral part of, the temptation.

That is one of the outstanding kinds of temptation to-day. When we see the vast amount of corporeal sin in the world that has its origin in unregulated appetite, lust, lasciviousness, and the awful consequences of such indulgences, we confess we cannot understand why scholarly men are so one-sided as to insist that the first temptation must have been purely a subjective psychical allurement. The Biblical version is certainly more inclusive and better balanced than that theory.

Then the woman saw that the tree was *"a delight to the eyes."* How true to the actual character of temptation as we know it to-day! Here the *soma* and the *psuche* were about equally engaged, the one the avenue through which the appeal came to the other: eyes by which the beauty of the tree could be carried to a mind with its esthetic powers to appreciate it. What a wonderfully analytical book the Bible is! Did the writer of this narrative understand modern physiological psychology?

The Biblical text probes still deeper into the very inner nature of temptation: the woman also saw that "the tree was to be *desired to make one wise.*" There you have the third fundamental factor in all human testing. While the senses were involved, this last temptation was predominantly psychical—"to make one wise." How many people to-day sin mostly in these interior forms, while corporeally they keep themselves quite pure and upright! They cherish envy, anger, resentment, sinful ambition, and (worst of all because most inner) spiritual pride and

self-righteousness. Then, too, how many people to-day try to find and take advantage of a "short cut" to knowledge—to heavenly wisdom—only to be bitterly disappointed in the end!

Thus the first temptation was threefold in its appeal: first, chiefly physical; second, physico-psychical in about equal ratio; third, mainly psychical. Here we perceive the all-inclusive nature of human temptation. We know of no other way by which moral tests come to men. So Christ, the Second Adam, had His three-fold temptation. So St. John speaks of the three kinds of sin: "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life" (1 John 2:16). How else could the pristine temptation have come in such a way to the human family as to integrate into the whole composite constitution of man?

V

The Serpent in Eden

We must now consider another cause of stumbling to the skeptics and rationalistic critics. In some respects infidels and liberalists are much alike. In the days of the dominance of the books of Voltaire, Paine, Ingersoll, and Underwood, the writer perused many infidel books and tracts, and found that the objections of the old out-and-out infidels to the Bible are precisely the ones exploited to-day by the rationalistic critics. Thus rationalism is largely a recrudescence of infidel attitudes of mind. Just as the infidel arguments of former days were overcome by

competent Christian apologists, so the objections of to-day's rationalists are being met by capable conservative scholars.

According to the narrative in Genesis 3, the serpent was the inveigler of our first parents. If we take the teaching of the whole Bible into consideration on this point, we can only identify the serpent as the instrument of Satan. Wherever the matter is touched upon in the Scriptures, a Satanic element is assumed in the original temptation. Christ surely must have had this reference in mind when He declared that Satan was a liar from the beginning—a liar and the father of lies. There is nothing else in history to which, as far as we know, He could have referred. He did not often speak in enigmas, especially of such a kind as afforded no clue to their solution. The Jews surely could have put no other construction on His words.

Let us deal as frankly as possible with this subject. Difficulties must not be evaded by the Christian apologist. First, the question arises, Why was Satan permitted to enter the garden? Here again the problem of man's free moral agency comes to the fore. No matter if we would be utterly unable to draw the line ourselves, we know that every ethical test must be so arranged and calculated as to subject our nature to a real strain; it must be severe enough to be an actual ordeal, and yet not so severe as to overcome the power of resistance in the will. Apparently, the mere presence of the inhibited tree in the midst of this beautiful and abundant Paradise did not constitute an adequate test *per se*. Therefore when Satan, as long afterward in the case of

Job, essayed to put Adam and Eve to the test, God did not intervene. Had He done so, His action would have prevented the application of an adequate moral test to our first parents. That would have been equivalent to the nullification of man's ethical powers; at least, it would have indicated that no opportunity was to be provided for him to exercise and develop them. Powers unused become atrophied. To create a moral agent and then provide no chance for moral discipline would have been absurd.

Superficial infidels and critics find fault with God for permitting Satan to intrude upon the scene. They might by the same token take exception to our own environment to-day. Evil is in the world; that patent fact no one can deny. Some time or other God must have permitted it to enter the world. So how does the objection to the Biblical story of its entrance into the world afford any relief in considering the difficult problems it creates? Since evil is here in the world, the Genetical account of its coming is the most rational one that has yet been proposed. Its whole tenor is in complete accord with the inherent nature of moral reality. Emerson writes profoundly:

> For He that ruleth high and wise,
> Nor pauseth in His plan,
> Will tear the sun out of the skies
> Ere freedom out of man.

Why was Satan permitted to enter Eden in the guise of a serpent? If he had appeared in the guise of an angel of light, he would have overborne the

primitive pair's powers of resistance: the test would have been too severe. On the other hand, had he appeared in his real character and form, his hideousness would have so appalled our first parents that they would have fled from him in terror. Instead, Satan made use of the subtle—though not evil *per se*—creature named "the serpent," which has been credited among all peoples with peculiar powers of fascination over the members of the human race.

There is also profound significance, both philosophical and scientific, in the fact that Satan used a creature of the natural world as the vehicle of his blandishments. This accords again with the science of the day, which postulates the interpenetration of the natural with the psychical or spiritual realm. If the natural cosmos and man's psychical nature interpenetrate, and are thus unified, then the natural domain must have a part in all the transactions that concern man. Had Satan been permitted to use a merely subjective approach, nature and man would not have interpenetrated at this vital point, and that would have rendered the test fantastic, mythical and mystical, not practical and organic. Such theories always leave things suspended in the air, because they have no footing in the world of reality in which we live and move and have our being.

That there must have been a Satanic factor in the original temptation is proved by the fact that there is a Satanic—that is, a personal—element in evil to-day. Observe the malignity and persistence of evil in history and at the present time, and you will realize that they evidence the ubiquity and thorough-

ness of the work of testing that Satan is still doing in the world. Moral evil can never have its source in merely the mechanical and impersonal. That would make evil only physical, but we know from the universal witness of mankind that moral evil, and not mere physical evil, exists in the world. Otherwise no man's conscience would ever condemn him for wrong-doing.

CHAPTER V

FROM PARADISE LOST TO PARADISE FOUND

I

Some Realistic Touches in the Biblical Story

1. "And the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made for themselves aprons."

What genuine realism is this! Sin had already begun its poisonous work, and the loveliness of the body must be concealed from its gaze. Moreover, it foretokened the fact that when sin had run its course, the ruins of that loveliness would be too repulsive to bear exposure. Observe any person of your community, no matter how much physical perfection he may naturally possess, who starts out on a career of sinful indulgence. Soon the marks of moral pollution will be obvious in his physique.

It was so with our first parents. There could have been nothing offensive about their physical constitution as it came pure and beautiful from the hands of the Creator; there was no need for covering because there was no occasion for the sense of

shame. In the progress of their sin, however, just as their souls became morally ugly, so their corporeal nature in some measure became distorted, warped and unsightly. If that were not so obviously the ultimate effect of sin to-day, men might have some reason to think that the Bible overstrains the point here. In view of the fact, however, that sin to-day affects the body so sadly, the Genetical story is none too realistic in its account of its effects.

2. Here is another touch that reads like a modern recital of the way of the transgressor. Near the end of that tragical day, when our first parents became aware of the approach of God in the garden, they hid themselves among the trees. Precisely so does sin affect men to-day. Let them do any wrong, especially a heinous one, and their first impulse is to hide. The criminal fears to come out in the open. Especially do sinful and impenitent people desire to hide from God; that is, to shut God out of their thoughts and lives as much as possible. "He that doeth truth cometh to the light," said our Lord. But "every one that doeth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." In one place the Bible says that at the last day the wicked will call on the hills to fall on them and hide them from the face of the Almighty. Whatever we may think of the writer of the Genesis story, he certainly had true insight into the nature and effects of sin.

3. The conduct of Adam and Eve when they tried to shift the blame for their obliquity upon others also reads like a "modern instance." The man, in trying to excuse himself, said: "The woman whom

thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." If this is not literal history, it surely is true to life. First, the man wanted to throw the responsibility back upon God. Just so to-day many sinners try to put the blame of their obliquity upon God. They declare that, if God had made them and the world after a perfect model, they never would have gotten steeped in sin. Or they blame environment, heredity and the very constitution of things. Then the man also blamed the *woman* for his offense. Nothing in men's conduct to-day in this respect contradicts the doctrine that they have inherited their disposition from Adam.

The woman's conduct was little better. Instead of acknowledging her sin openly and honestly, she blamed the serpent. So the Genetical story hews close to the line of reality. The original sin was generic, seminal and all-inclusive, according to the Genetical account, and that is a strong argument in favor of the historicity of the narrative. The writer employed an acuteness and analytical skill far beyond the unaided inventive powers of the human mind at that early date. If he was relating actual history, we have an adequate explanation of his marvelous insight.

4. God's treatment of the parties engaged in this transaction would also credit the writer with a highly improbable ethical acuteness if it were his own invention; for he tells us that God punished the serpent for alluring his victims, and them for yielding to the temptation. Note God is not said to have punished our first parents for *being tempted,* but only for *succumbing* to the tempter's solicitations.

Each party was punished only for his individual share in the transaction. This is the absolutely judicial way of dealing with offenders. "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Each person is guilty of his own sin, and upon him the penalty should be visited. From what human source could the Biblical writer in that primeval age have gotten his fine ethical sense and insight, his incisive power of just and discriminating moral judgment?

II

Man's Supreme Value in the Sight of His Maker

At this point we desire to deal with another objection that is sometimes brought by both critics and infidels against the historicity of the Biblical story of man's first disobedience. It is alleged that the transaction is childish all through; that it is absurd to think that God would deal in this direct way with a simple, obscure human couple. He made the universe, and guides the stars and planets in their orbits.

This objection, we confess, sounds strange to come from the advocates of theistic evolution, who contend that man was originally nine-tenths, not to say ninety-nine one-hundredths, animal. They maintain that God cared for this low-typed creature, centered his attention, indeed, upon him, actually took so much interest in him that, in order to train

his dawning moral consciousness, He punished him whenever he did something wrong.

If God would have watched so minutely over such a brutal creature (supposing he ever existed), it is difficult to see why it would have been unworthy of Him to deal lovingly and yet justly with moral beings created directly in His own image and endowed with real moral and spiritual attributes. Or is this whole critical hypothesis accepted and propagated in the interest of Deism and out of antipathy to supernatural immanence and superintendence? We should like to know the answer of those critics to whom this challenge applies.

If Theism has any solid basis whatever, it means that God created the infinitesimal as well as the immense. He must have created each atom, or, if you choose, the universal ether from which the vortices, electrons, atoms and molecules were formed. Does God care for vortices and atoms? He surely must or He would not have made them. God not only created the ether, but He must preserve and uphold every part of it in all otherwise unoccupied space, and also every atom in palpable and ponderable substances. If He cares for atomic things, why is it thought to be beneath His dignity to deal with rational and moral beings whom He brought into existence?

Here the Bible teaching is a unit, a beautiful harmony. It teaches everywhere that God does care, is interested, is friendly. He knows every sparrow's fall; He numbers the hairs of the head; He clothes the fields with their garments of beauty. If He so cares for these creatures, how much more

doth He care for you, oh, ye of little faith! He cared for Moses as a babe, for Samuel, and for Christ. Jesus stopped in the midst of His heavenly tasks to bless the little children; nay, this was a vital part of His redemptive and worldwide mission. He declared that the angels rejoice over *one* sinner that repents. All this varied Bible teaching authorizes us to maintain that God cared for Adam and Eve, the ancestors of the human race. The Biblical revelation is a unified and co-ordinated *system*. It reveals to men a full-orbed philosophy, a complete and rational world-view.

III

Why God Created Man a Free Agent [1]

For a little while we return to the question, "Why did God create moral agents at all, when He knew there was peril of their falling into sin and ruin?" May we call attention to the fact that this difficulty is not created by the Bible or by Christian theology? Suppose the Bible had never been written, would it not still be true that God created and constituted moral beings with the possibility of sinning and suffering? Or suppose there is no personal Creator, but that Pantheism or Materialism is the correct view to take of the creation; is it not still true that the Power, whatever it was, that brought man into being made him a moral personality capable

[1] A forceful presentation of free moral agency is given in James H. Snowden's "The Psychology of Religion" (1916), pp. 55-61, 101, 122, 123.

of doing wrong and suffering for it? Would rejection of the Biblical doctrine solve the problem? It would not; it would leave it in Cimmerian darkness; and, saddest of all, it would leave no hope that the solution will ever be forthcoming.

While Biblical teaching does not solve every difficulty included in the problem of evil, it furnishes the best solution we know, or at least throws more light on the mystery than any other system of thought. In view of the plan of redemption revealed in the Scriptures, we see many gleams of light. God saw that it was better to create moral beings, even though they might sin, and His Son be called upon to redeem them, than either to live in lonely isolation forever or create an unmoral universe filled with mere automata. For the parts that we cannot explain, the Bible teaches us to trust God, because, though now we see through a glass darkly, we shall sometime see face to face. The Bible promises a solution of all our problems some day, and Bible promises are dependable. Skepticism and Agnosticism afford no such hope and comfort.

Why did God make the adventure of creating free moral agents? Because He was not afraid of the final outcome. He foreknew its end from the beginning. He knew that His purpose could not be ultimately thwarted. In the human world the man who is unwilling to assume risk and responsibility will never accomplish anything that is worth while. Some people do not want to have children; that would involve some responsibility. Some do not want to teach school, or preach the gospel; it might entail some responsibility. Not so with God; He

was unafraid. Neither need we cherish fear; God will carry all the responsibility that belongs to Him; He will not hold us responsible for His creation of us as moral beings; He will hold us responsible only for the *use we make of our moral agency.*

What a world this is for the making and development of moral heroism, if we will but employ our God-given powers!

On the other hand, Thomas Huxley, the well-known agnostic, did not prove himself to be a truly heroic ethical thinker. In one of his writings he says: "I protest that if some power would agree to make me always think what is true and do what is right, on condition of being turned into a clock and wound up every morning, I should instantly close with the offer."

That means he would have preferred to be a manikin run by machinery rather than to suffer the strain involved in living the life of a real man with moral power and moral character. This is pure Hedonism in ethics. Such faint-heartedness always gets the better of a man who continues long enough to think only in mechanical and materialistic terms. A man must always pay the penalty for leaving God out of his thoughts. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." For our part, we would a thousand times prefer to be an autonomy than an automaton.

Let us try to think this problem through: A moral economy (involving also the spiritual element, of course) is the highest kind of economy of which we know or can form any conception. Moral and spiritual excellence is the highest kind of excellence.

An exclusively mechanistic *régime,* such as is accepted and advocated by far too many scholars and educators to-day, belongs to a much lower order. When God came to the making of man in the creative process, He had already made many mechanisms. Rational human beings, even, do not make machines merely to see them run. Why, then, expect God to make an exclusively mechanistic universe, which He must then sit by and watch while it runs on and on? [2] No; a much better and higher view to take is, that the whole mechanical universe was created and fitted out to be the arena and stadium for the activities of a race of the highest kind of beings, namely, free moral and spiritual personalities capable of eternal felicity and progress in blissful fellowship with their Creator and Preserver. That is the teaching of the Bible. Is it not an attractive and worth-while program and prospect? Surely the mind can attain to no higher conception. Once more, then, is the Biblical doctrine vindicated at the bar of reason.

It must never be thought that the gift of freedom which was conferred upon man was the gift of a defect. It was an asset and not a liability. It is to-day, and ever has been, that superior gift and prerogative which distinguishes man from all other creatures and elevates him far above them. Those who are much upset by the impenetrableness of the mystery of human freedom should remember, too, as we have previously stated, that the problem of simple sense perception is just as impenetrably mysterious as the problem of volition. Freedom is just

[2] Cf. Lt. Col. W. H. Turton's "The Truth of Christianity," ninth edition, pp. 76, 77.

as much a matter of human experience, just as empirical, as is any other activity of the mind.

IV

Man's Ejection From Eden

The next item for consideration in the narrative of Genesis 3 is the ejection of the unhappy pair from Eden on account of their sin. The reason given for this treatment of man is, "lest he take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever." Was this mere resentment on the part of God? Skeptics sometimes assume it to be so. Let us make a more careful examination. We should not treat the Bible superficially nor draw hasty conclusions.

The cosmos as God made it contained a vital principle or force capable of imparting to man perpetual physical life or continuous existence without decay or death. This principle, no doubt, was implicit in the whole natural cosmos, with the one exception of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Further, this vitalizing or life-renewing principle, although it pervaded all organic nature, was localized in one tree, called in the Biblical account "the tree of life." By the eating of its fruit the person's body would be constantly renewed and sustained. Had our first parents and their posterity obeyed God, no doubt the human family, as it spread over the earth, would have converted all of it into an Eden. In that event, man would have truly exercised dominion over the whole realm of nature according to the divine promise. Then this life principle, resid-

ing seminally in the tree of life, would have permeated and possessed in all fullness the entire natural cosmos, making of every tree a tree of life.

Unfortunately our ancestors sinned, and thus corrupted their nature, bringing misery and shame to themselves. Suppose now they had been permitted, in this sinful and unhappy state, to eat of the tree of life, what a welter of good and evil that act would have produced! The life-renewing principle in that tree was a good and holy principle, but how could it have mixed with the evil in man without giving it perpetuity and making ethical "confusion worse confounded?" Had God permitted such a conjunction, it would have imparted immortal life to man in his sinful condition. No; it would be better to let sin take its natural course—that is, end in the death of the body, permit the separate existence of the soul for a time, and then through redemption in Christ bring body and soul together again at the resurrection in a higher and glorified union. The ultimate plan that God really carried out in history and redemption must have been predetermined by Him; for God, by virtue of His perfect prescience, can never be taken by surprise. So it was a token of mercy on God's part, even more than an act of punishment, when God excluded our sinful progenitors from the tree of life.

Man was cast out of the garden, therefore, because a sinful being, such as he had become, could not have made himself feel at home in a perfect realm, whether physically or ethically perfect. He would have been a misfit. Such an environment would have tormented his soul with its withering,

disconcerting disapproval of his presence. Could a corrupt man live in heaven, a place of perfect purity as depicted in the Bible? Life is tolerable only in the midst of a congruous environment.

Hence sinful man was mercifully ejected from Eden, and domiciled in a world fitted to his unethical status. This is the meaning of God's curse upon the ground; and also upon the serpent, which became the representative harmful creature in the realm of nature.

However, this fallen condition of the natural realm will not always continue; eventually will come "the restitution of all things"; nature as well as man shall be redeemed and glorified, and thus "all the works of the devil shall be destroyed." In proof of this teaching we cite the following salient passages of Holy Writ: Isa. 11:6-9; 1 John 3:8; Rom. 8:18-23; 2 Pet. 3:1-14; Rev. 21:1-3, 10. Thus God's plan is organic and complete; it is no hit or miss program.

V

The Angels With the Flaming Sword

A most fascinating subject of investigation is the statement that God "placed at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the flame of a sword, which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life."

What does this mean? Is it historical verity? We believe it is. Certainly if the rest of the story admits

of the presence of the supernatural, this is no more difficult to believe than any other miracle.

Our explanation is this: All God's dealing with human beings was and is for their moral and spiritual discipline and development. For a time it was right and necessary that these guardian angels and the flaming sword should be stationed at the portals of Eden to warn and remind our first parents; to warn them that they could not go back to their elysium while their defiled condition persisted; to remind them of their sad loss through sin. At the very beginning, when the human family was getting its start, all the primary relations and responsibilities had to be indelibly stamped upon our first parents in both body and mind. Was it not fitting, therefore, to give them such an impressive warning as the Cherubim with the flaming sword, in order that the lesson of their moral responsibility might be so well learned that it would never be forgotten as long as there were men living in the world?

VI

Eden Vanishes! Eden Reappears!

However, it is evident that the garden, with the tree of life, the Cherubim and the sword of flame, did not long remain. They disappeared. As the garden is never mentioned in the subsequent narrative except as a memory, we surely are justified in believing that it vanished.

Do we ever meet it again? Yes: in hints and adumbrations in the apocalyptic prophecies of the

Old Testament, but only in distinct reality at the close of the Sacred Volume—in the Revelation of St. John, to whom was given a beatific vision of the Paradise of God, with the river and the tree of life. We meet it again, that is, in the book that contains the revelation and promise of the restoration of all things. Thus the first book of the Bible and the last book correlate, accord, and reveal God's marvelous plan from its beginning to its end. The Bible must be more than a human Book.

But how can we be sure? It is not so difficult, after all, if we will only avoid two errors: false mysticism and the unhistorical method. The first feels called on to separate the spiritual and the natural, as if both did not belong to God's cosmos; the second tries to divorce history and religion, as if God would make a world, people it with a human family and then give them a religion suspended in the air instead of one set down in the very movement of human history. These are misinterpretations of the fundamental principles of Christianity, which belong to the realm of reality, not of imagination and ideality. The Bible never dissevers three things—nature, history and religion. Hence it depicts a sane religion, with its feet on the ground; yet in the midst of its practical affairs, its thoughts are often occupied with the contemplation of celestial and eternal verities. The Biblical system is not narrow and one-sided; it is our human systems that are so. No wonder we do not get on in our spiritual thinking when we cast God's revelation aside, and try to solve impossible problems by the use of the unaided human intellect!

But we return to our present theme: What became of the Edenic garden and the tree of life? Suppose we ask first, What gave to Eden its beauty, perfection and glory? Of course it was the grace and effulgence of God. This glorifying divine power immanent in it gave to it the peculiar qualities of its perfect pristine condition. That glory was not necessarily in the essence or material substance of the soil, trees, flowers and fruits, but, while its presence lasted, it glorified that essence. Now, after God's purpose of discipline for our first parents reached its denouement in the sin of Adam, He simply withdrew that gracious, glorifying presence from the garden and all its natural objects, just as He had withdrawn His heavenly grace from the beings who had sinned. The garden remained, but the light and loveliness of that glorifying presence once gone, it was no more its old self than was Adam after his sin. After it had thus become like all the rest of the earth, even its site was soon lost and forgotten.

The distinction drawn here is that between substance and the divine power which glorifies substance. Have you seen a converted person whose face was radiant with the divine grace within him? Have you seen the same man after he had backslidden and fallen into sin again? Did you note the difference even in his facial expression? God's glorifying grace had been withdrawn from him, and his physiognomy was altered.

But if God's glorifying grace and love were withdrawn from the garden of Eden, they were not in their withdrawal destroyed. As God's attributes,

they still remained intact and perfect. As we have said, they appear again to the Apostle John in his apocalyptic vision. He is permitted to look into heavenly realities, and behold the handiwork of the glorifying divine power in the Paradise of God. Not only so: He saw indeed, the New Jerusalem, with its tree and river of life, descending from God out of heaven, for the purpose of re-glorifying the cosmos and re-imparadising the world.

This return of God's glorifying grace to earth is brought about, as we may see if we note closely, through the mediation of the Lamb, who was "slain from the foundation of the world" in God's eternal decree, and historically slain on Calvary. By His incarnation, perfect obedience, sacrificial death, resurrection, ascension and glorification He has redeemed mankind and made possible the restoration of nature. Thus when man's body is restored to him in the resurrection, he will live in a restored cosmos. Then the "new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness" will be a blessed reality.

A most interesting question (it has practical value if it afford some satisfaction to the inquiring mind) is this: Was the tree of life in John's heavenly vision a *literal* tree, as was the tree of life in the historic garden of Eden? We reply, it is not necessary to entertain such a view. The book of Revelation belongs to the prophetic and apocalyptic literature of the Bible, and therefore must be largely interpreted as symbolical. On its face, much of its language is the language of metaphor. With thinkers and Bible students this is patent, and need not

be argued. Therefore John may have been permitted to express spiritual realities under the form of physical imagery. Thus the tree of life in the New Jerusalem may simply have pictured that divine grace which was withdrawn from the original tree, but which will return to fill and glorify nature again with the vital principle which will sustain man's glorified body throughout its immortal career.

If St. John's representations of the New Jerusalem be thus figurative, its wonderful symbolism may be interpreted in this way: The foundation stones would typify the solid and enduring basis of the spiritual realm in eternal verity; the jasper walls, protection from all evil and exclusion of all sin; the golden streets, the preciousness of our spiritual possessions; the open gates of pearl, the continuous welcome to all true believers; the river and tree of life, the continual flow of joyous existence from God; the crystal sea, perfect knowledge of innermost truth and reality; the throne of God, His eternal sovereignty and dominion.

The apostle's beautiful imagery thus becomes the vehicle for representing the most precious realities and experiences in the spiritual realm.

VII

Some Illuminating Beams From Science

Now we shall venture a step further, and that, too, we hope, without losing our way in mystic speculation, or parting with the realism of Biblical teaching. Making use of the latest results in science,

especially in the departments of physics and chemistry, we may find that, after all, it is not necessary to dissolve into mere symbolism the tree of life which John beheld in his heavenly vision. Of course, if the tree is construed to be literal, the other parts of the New Jerusalem,—the jasper walls, the gates of pearl, the streets of gold,—must be so construed as well.

What is the foundation hypothesis of physical science to-day? That there is a universal ether, the primordial material, the material *substrate,* out of which all ponderable substances have been formed. It is the basis of all material things; the essence of all material substances. It is so fine, ethereal, mobile, ductile and elastic that the orbs of all the systems of the universe can move through it, no matter what their velocity, without friction. Yet in its totality it is so powerful that it is the basis of the attraction of gravitation, holding all the stars and planets in their orbits. If it should be said that this is only wild speculation, we reply that present science cannot dispense with belief in such an ether; it can account for nothing without it. Present science rears its whole structure upon such an elemental substance, the substratum of all palpable and ponderable material. You cannot explain light, heat, electricity, and gravitation without it. With it, you can explain many things in physical science that are otherwise inexplicable.

The ether is the primordial material which God made. Doubtless it was homogeneous, continuous, atomless, perfectly ductile, yet quiescent and at perfect equilibrium. Had there been no external power

to set it in motion, it would have remained motionless and impalpable forever. So God must have given it its original motion, and imparted to it its force, just as previously He had brought it into reality or existence. The latest speculative science says that the ether, when set in motion by the Power that made it, produced whirls or vortice-rings, which formed electrons; these combined into atoms of divers kinds; the atoms combined into molecules of vast variety, thus forming the numerous kinds of palpable substances, such as air, water, lime. Thus all the heavenly bodies were formed. The ether was not used up in the formation of these palpable and ponderable bodies; so that the rest of space,—that is, all the interspaces not occupied by stars, planets, comets,—is occupied by the original imponderable ether.

If science has proved anything, it has proved that there are forms of matter which are so mobile and ethereal that they almost bridge the gulf between material and mental substances—at all events, here is where mind and matter meet, integrate, correlate, and interpenetrate.

If, now, there is any basis of truth in these latest inductions of physical science—and we are disposed to accept them until something better and more adequate has been proposed—may it not be that St. John saw a real literal New Jerusalem, whose material was composed of the original glorious ether or substance which God made? Though the natural eye cannot behold it, may it not become visible when God imparts to man the beatific vision, the power of seeing all reality "face to face"? May there not,

therefore, be a real Paradise of God somewhere in the universe, with a real river and tree of life, a real crystal sea, a real throne of dominion, all of it concreted and organized from the glorious, marvelous, coherent substance as it came originally from the divine creative hand?

John saw the New Jerusalem descending from God out of heaven to be established here on earth, where it said God would make His tabernacle among men, and would be their God forever. What can this mean but that the glorious primordial material will be the means through which God will re-glorify the present cosmos, and restore it to its pristine beauty and perfection. In this way, at all events, the Biblical system is seen to be coherent, unified, concrete, historical.

True, by this view the end will be apocalyptic. If there ever is to be a judgment, a last day, a perfect establishment of the reign of righteousness, however, it must be of that character. Therefore the coming apocalypse will be just as historical, and thus just as real, as were the experiences of our first parents in the first Paradise.

The scientific theory of matter here propounded will also help us to understand the nature of the resurrected and glorified body. Paul went so far as to call it a "spiritual" (*pneumatikon*) body. This must mean that the resurrected and glorified body will be composed of so fine and ethereal a form of material substance as to be almost like spiritual substance. It will therefore be perfectly responsive and pliant to every movement of the soul. The apostle could not have meant that the body would be the

same substance as the spirit, or identifiable with the spirit itself, for that would render absurd everything that he had said about the *resurrection* of the body. The spirit would need no resurrection, because it never dies; and it would be the height of inconsistency to suppose that God would raise a material body from the grave, and then convert it into spiritual substance. However, if He raises the body from the dead, changes its form into something like the original glorious material out of which all palpable substances were formed, and organizes it about the redeemed and purified soul, a beautifully consistent account of our origin and final destiny is the result, bringing the Bible and science into truly sublime accord.

Let no suspicion arise that we mean, by this method of Biblical interpretation, to obliterate or even to blur the distinction between mind and matter, between material and spiritual substances. No; they are distinct substances and entities, and each retains forever its *idiomata*. Mind is not sublimated matter. The universal ether, however refined and exalted, is created material substance. God is the absolute and eternal Spirit, who brought the ether into being, developed it as has been indicated, and when He desired to make the mind (*psuche* or *pneuma*) of man, He created it a *psychical* entity similar to His own spiritual essence, but so constituted that it would have perfect congeniality with the physical organism He had prepared as an instrument for it. Yet the perfecting of the human soul was the ultimate end in God's purpose in the making of man; therefore, the *corpus* previously created, was so

framed and endued that it would fit perfectly the needs of the precious, conscious and immortal psychical agent with which it was to be joined. Thus there was a perfect union, communion and interaction between soul and body, between mind and matter, but there was no consubstantiation of the two essences.[3] And in the resurrection this beautiful conjunction will be restored and sublimated.

Our conclusion is that the historical view of the Biblical revelation yields a consistent and unified plan from beginning to end; that this fact is a cogent argument in favor of the historical interpretation; that this conception affords an adequate explanation of origins, means employed, and destinies to be attained; that all other views create insuperable difficulties, and offer inadequate explanations. The realistic Biblical interpretation also affords the positive assurance that Paradise lost will be more than regained when the "new heavens and the new earth" shall appear, and that it will be an actual, concrete restitution, not a fanciful, mythical, legendary, allegorical or mystical one.

It will be the grand *finale* of God's eternal decree in the creation of the universe, delayed on account of man's sin and realized in spite of man's sin, through redeeming grace in Jesus Christ, through whom all

[3] The reader will find an able argument for the doctrine of dualism and interaction in psychology in James Bissett Pratt's "Matter and Spirit: A Study of Mind and Body in Their Relation to the Spiritual Life" (1922). Thoroughly at home in the great science of psychology, Dr. Pratt marshals his arguments with telling force. Attention may also be called to the present writer's article entitled, "Two Suggestions for Psychology," in *The Lutheran Quarterly* for October, 1923, which has also been issued in separate brochure form.

things were made, and without whom nothing was made that was made (John 1:3). "For in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through Him and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things are held in unison" (Col. 1:16,17). "For of Him, and through Him, and unto Him are all things: to Him be the glory forever. Amen" (Rom. 11:36).

The original Paradise, which was lost through man's transgression, will be more than regained through the redeeming love and power of God revealed in Jesus Christ, our Lord. The teaching of the Sacred Scriptures coheres throughout, as is natural, because it is all informed and inspired by one Mind, the Mind of the Holy Spirit. He it was who unified all the diverse thoughts and temperaments of "the holy men of old" who wrote as they were moved and guided by Him.

INDEX

Adam, 18, 25, 26, 28, 29, 35, 42, 43, 45, 51, 56, 60, 64, 73.
Æsop, 26.
Agency, moral (see Moral agency).
Agnosticism, 65.
Allegorical interpretation, the, 30.
Allegory, 11, 13, 23-30.
Angels with the flaming sword, the, 70, 71.
Animalism, man's primitive, 30-33, 46, 62, 63.
Animism, 31.
Apocalypse, 74, 78.
Atoms, 77.
Automata, 46, 65, 66.

Babylonian myths, 15, 16.
Barton, G. A., 15, 16.
Blaming others, 60, 61.
Body and soul, 50, 52-54, 78-80.
Bunyan, John, 24, 26.

Chance, a fair, 32, 34, 35, 46, 56.
Christ and the Eden story, 18; His sinlessness, 41, 42; His temptation, 42, 55; His redemption, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 20, 65, 80, 81.
Clay, A. T., 16.
Conservatives, 11, 13, 23.
Cook, C. C., 30.
Creation of man, 18, 19, 31.
Critics, Biblical, 12, 18; mediating, 12, 17, 21; radical, 12; their honesty and sincerity, 22, 23; their logic, 23.

Determinism and morality, 39, 40.
Dods, M., 12.
Driver, S. R., 12, 21, 22.

Eden vanishes and re-appears, 71-75.
Ejection from Eden, 68-70.
Electrons, 77.
Emerson, 56.
Ether, the universal, 76-81.
Ethical features of the Fall story, 34-44.
Eve, 26, 28, 29, 43, 45, 46, 60, 64.
Evil strain in first pair, no, 40-42, 51.
Evolution, 25, 30, 31, 32, 35.

Fetichism, 31.
Figurative and literal sense, 30.
Freedom of man, 32-40, 56, 67.
Folklore, 11, 13, 20.
Forbidden tree, the, 49-55.

Gnostics, 32.
God, the Creator, 35, 42, 46-50, 56, 59, 64-67, 78-81; not the author of sin, 32; His foreknowledge, 65; His minute care, 62-64; His punitive justice, 61, 62.
Gruber, L. F., 36.

Hamartology, 20, 21.
Hedonism, 66.
Hermeneutics, 29.

Historical character of the Christian religion, 19, 20, 72, 78, 80.
Historical interpretation, the, 45-59, 78.
Historicity of the Bible, 11, 13, 18, 19, 23, 29, 70, 72, 78.
Huxley, T., 37, 66.

Infidels, 12, 54, 56.
Ingersoll, 54.
Inspiration, Biblical, 21, 22, 23, 81; plenary, 12, 14.

John's vision, 72, 74, 77.

Kant, 27.
Kent, C. F., 12.
Knowledge, a short cut to, 51, 52, 54.

Legend, 11, 13, 20-23.

Man's value, 62-64.
Manicheans, 32.
Marriage and creation, 19.
Mechanistic régime, a, 67.
Modernism, 12, 13.
Monotheism, 31.
Moral agency, 40, 46-48, 56, 64-68.
Moral evil, 32, 33, 58.
Motives and freedom, 38, 39.
Mythical theory, the, 15-20.
Myths, 11, 13, 15.

Nathan's story, 24, 25.
New Jerusalem, the, 74, 75, 77, 78.
Non-historical views, 12, 15-33.
Noumena, 37.

Origen, 30.
Orr, James, 31.

Paine, T., 54.
Parables, 23-30.
Paradise, 55; lost and regained, 59-61.
Paul and Adam, 18.
Phenomena, 37.
Polytheism, 31.
Pratt, J. B., 80.
Primordial material, the, 76, 78, 79.
Pringle-Pattison, A. S., 36.
Problems, their solution promised, 65.
Psychology, 49, 51, 53, 78-80.

Rationalists, 54, 55.
Realistic touches in the Bible story, 59-62.
Religious teaching of the Bible, 12, 17.
Restitution, the final, 70, 72, 74, 78, 80.

Sanders, F. K., 13.
Satan, 55-58.
Science, beams from, 76-81.
Serpent in Eden, the, 27, 54-58.
Shame, the beginning of, 59, 60.
Sin, Origin of, 11, 12, 20; sense of, 16; no light offense, 42-44; its nature, 43, 44.
Smith, G. A., 12.
Snowden, J. H., 30, 64.
Soteriology, 20.
Spencer, H., 37.
Subjective experience, 27, 28, 50, 53.
Symbolism, 74, 75, 76.

Temptation, the first, 21.
Test, a moral, 46-48, 52-54.
Tradition, 11, 20.
Traditionalists, 11.
Tree, the forbidden, 49-54, 55.
Tree of life, the, 68-70, 73, 74, 78.
Turton, W. H., 67.

Voltaire, 54.

233.14
K523m
c.1

68-2436

Keyser, Leander Sylvester
Man's first disobedience

DATE DUE

233.14
K523m
c.1

68-2436

Keyser, Leander Sylvester
AUTHOR

Man's first disobedience
TITLE

DATE DUE | BORROWER'S NAME

APR 5 1982 | Kevin Fiscus
APR 28 1982 | Joseph, Wainer.
MR24 '95 | Danny A. Domingo #195

[redacted]
NORTHEASTERN BIBLE COLLEGE
[redacted]

THE MASTER'S COLLEGE
POWELL LIBRARY
SANTA CLARITA, CA 91321

233.14
K44m
c.1
68-2436

THE MASTER'S COLLEGE
233.14 K523m MAIN
Keyser, Leander Syl/Man's first disobedi
3 3540 00002 4447